

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

Chairman

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ACADEMY INAUGURATED IN TOKYO

Primarily through the devoted efforts of Dr. Alfred Schmidt, a member of the directors of the Evangelical Academy in Germany, who arrived in Japan in the fall of 1957, the Nippon Christian Academy was inaugurated at the International House in Tokyo on June 12. A 15-member board, made up of leading political and business leaders as well as evangelists, has been set up, with Motojiro Sugiyama, former Socialist speaker of the House of Representatives, as board chairman.

Sugiyama responded early to evangelist Schmidt's efforts to bring together Christian leaders from various groups both in and outside the churches. Members of the Academy include former Prime Minister Tetsu Katayama and Jiro Hoshijima, a leader in the majority Liberal-Democratic Party.

Objectives for the initial period of the newly inaugurated Academy are: "(1) to coordinate various lay movements now going on in Japan; (2) to organize several experimental study meetings, including a Marxism seminar, and (3) to organize a working nucleus for expansion and promotion of the new Christian movement."

COPIES BIBLE FIVE TIMES BY BRUSH

"In olden times the Japanese said that if one read a book a hundred times one would understand it, and I hope that I will be able to remember some of the Bible after I have copied it by brush ten times. In thanks to God for His blessings, I hope to continue my efforts as long as He permits me life on this earth." These are the words of Mr. Ishibei Kobiyama (80 years old) an elder of the Hobara church of Hobara machi, Date-gun, Fukushima prefecture, who, since 1948, has been reading the Bible faithfully and copying 2 or 3 chapters a day with brush and ink on Japanese paper. He dates each addition and adds some comment. He has completed the total New Testament five times and has begun the sixth writing.

Mr. Kobiyama says, "Everyone must believe in God and be saved by Him; and in order to be saved it is absolutely necessary to read the Bible." With the publication of the colloquial version he has begun copying it, whereas previously he had been working on the old translation.

He was born in an old family of the Buddhist (Jodo) faith and was one of the intelligentsia of the village having graduated from the old system middle school. Thirty years ago he happened to read the Bible and believed in the Gospel of Christ. However, wishing to avoid any fight with the Buddhist temple with which his ancestors had been associated for many generations he did not become baptized or go to church. Five years ago, under the guidance of Seisuke Masatomi of the Japan Home Bible League, he was baptized at the Hobara church and is now an elder there.

Masatomi says, "It may sound foolish to copy the Bible using a brush when it can be bought for 70 yen (20¢), but Kobiyama says it is for his children. He has nothing to leave his children, so if he leaves a Bible copied by himself his children will know that there was an earnest Christian among their ancestors.

JAPANESE CHRISTIANS GIVE WELCOME PARTY FOR AMBASSADOR AND
MRS. REISCHAUER

A welcome tea party, sponsored by some churches and Christian organizations, was held on June 1 at the International House, for U.S. Ambassador Edwin O. Reischauer. Approximately 250 were present for an afternoon of fellowship with the second son of A.K. Reischauer, former missionary to Japan.

Just as Mrs. Tamaki Uemura was giving her welcome speech in the beautiful garden a sudden shower forced the party indoors. In his response to the welcome address, Ambassador Reischauer, with his fluent Japanese, elicited much laughter by noting that in accordance with his name a shower (schauer) had come (Rei-rai means come in Japanese). The Ambassador stated that though he had attended many welcome parties since his arrival this was the most heart-warming, because most of the people here had known his parents as brothers in Christ. He also remarked that while speaking in the States, people often inquired as to what was the main religion in Japan and that his answer at such times was that it was

Christianity. This was, because, in spite of being only a small fraction of the total population, the influence of Christians in Japanese society was very great. Christians in Japan have truly become "salt" in their country. In response to an observation by Dr. Tsuru, president of Maiji Gakuin (a Christian school in Tokyo), that Ambassador Reischauer was now in a rather restricted position ("in a cage") and didn't have the freedom of his days as a professor, Reischauer noted that although he was now an ambassador and would not have time to meet each person individually and that the walls around the embassy were high, he had the same spirit of service to society that his parents had and that he desired their prayers and cooperation as Divine help was absolutely essential to the fulfillment of his difficult task.

TOKYU CHRISTIAN CRUSADE

Crusade headquarters give the total attendance figure for the 30-day Tokyo Christian Crusade at 226,762 and estimate that about 180,000 individuals, for an average of 6,000 per night, attended the widely publicized meetings. There were 8,941 decision cards signed, including both "seekers" and those who made "definite profession of faith in Christ as Saviour." Total offerings received at the meetings amounted to more than four million yen.

Close attention is being paid to the results of the activity of a follow-up committee which is active in directing the signers of the decision cards to various churches.

J.C.A.N. ANNOUNCES CHANGES

Tomio Muto has been appointed Chairman of the Japan Christian Activity News and Chuzo Yamada has been assigned as an Editor replacing Kaname Tsukahara who has been called to work with the General Affairs Department of the Kyodan.

Dr. Muto has had much experience in public relations as he presently serves as chief editor and president of the Kirisuto Shimbun (Christ Weekly) and has served in this area as a Japanese government official in Manchuria and near the end of the II World War as a director in the "Joho Kyoku" (Bureau of Information) in the Tojo War Cabinet.

Rev. Yamada is well known as the director of the Lacour Evangelism project in Japan. He has served three churches in Japan, the Ako church, the Uwajima church and the Kure Heian church. He also served a church in Korea just prior to the war. From 1938 to 1941 he studied at Drew and at Princeton where he received a degree in Master of Theology. McKinley College has also honored him with a honorary Doctor of Divinity. From 1955 to 1957, Rev. Yamada served as chairman of the West Chugoku District of the Kyodan. Last year Rev. Yamada participated in the WCC World Consultation on Evangelism held in Geneva on July 6-11.

